



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

AN ETYMON FOR ENGLISH "GUN"

Professor Ernest Weekley recently referred to *gun* as "an exasperating word,"¹ thus reflecting the general dissatisfaction with the etymons hitherto proposed. The word is probably a soldier's technical term which made its way into literary use long after it had begun to be current at siege and in battle.

O. Fr. *engin* < INGENIUM, which continued in Eng. as *gynne*, now *gin*, had other forms: *engeng* (*Roman de Thèbes*), which is the regular form outside of the *ē+i>i* territory; also *engien*, which appears to answer to a pronunciation *INGĒNUM, cf. *giens* < GENUS. Corresponding closely in meaning with these, but more restricted in territory, we find further *engan*, with a verb *enganer* which Meyer-Lübke (4416) refers to *INGANNARE, this of unknown origin. The territory where *engan* was known and used included the west and northwest of France, extending from Poitou through Normandy northeast to Arras and Hainault.² To illustrate the intermingling of *engin* and *engan* one might cite *Horn*, ed. Michel, 3324: *Qui fu plains d'engins et d'enganz*.

In English it is not apparent which form, whether *gunne* or *gonne*, is the older: probably they were equivalent spellings. The two passages in Chaucer have *gonne* (both in rhyme), and Roger Ascham would have his Courtlie Ientlemen "to shote faire in bow, or surelie in gon." It was with these and other facts in mind that I ran across the following entry in Gachet's *Glossaire roman*, s.v. "*enganer*": "Le hainuyer a gardé *engonner*; le picard et le bas-normand, *enganer*. . . . A Mons on dit encore *un engon*." If I mistake not, here is the needed intermediary between *engin*—*engan* and Eng. *gun*, and if the statement of a modern cyclopedia—that Edward III in 1327 employed some Hainaulters who used cannon against the Scotch—can be verified, we have perhaps hit upon, if not the very soldiers,

¹ *Transactions of the English Philological Society*, XXXIII, 327.

² From the literary texts may be cited: *Roman de Thèbes* 7961 (in rhyme); Philippe de Thaon, *Best.*, 529, Denis Piramus; Garnier de Pont-Ste-Maxence; Gautier d'Arras, *Herak.*, 6587; Jean Bodel; Jean de Condé, and others.

at least the sort of agents by which the word, in its dialectic form, was brought into England. But I must leave the justification of the local *engon* for *engan*,¹ as well as the filling in of this general outline, to a second series of "French Etymologies" now in preparation.²

T. ATKINSON JENKINS

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

¹ One might compare *Jaon*, like Eng. *John*, for *Jehan*, and other forms, noted by Herzog, *Neufranzösische Dialekttexte*, § 124.

² Cf. *Modern Philology*, X, 439 ff.